

AMAA

news



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The new headquarters of the AMAA at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ.

Great Joy for All People

by Movses B. Janbazian

"I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people." (Luke 2:10)

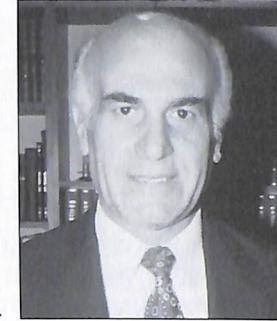
The Christmas season is a joyous time. We look forward with anticipation to the cheerful activities associated with this holiday – family reunions, sending and receiving Christmas cards, exchanging gifts, shopping for presents, caroling, visiting with friends, and so forth.

As Christians we also look forward to religious services and spirit-filled moments when we can praise God in a special way for His gift of His Only Begotten Son.

While most of us are fortunate to be able to have these and other joys of Christmas, there are many people for whom this season comes as a depressing time. Christmas becomes difficult for those who are going through trying days in their lives – the homeless, the unemployed, the poor, the shut-ins, those who are terminally ill, or have lost a loved one, or who suffer because of broken homes and relationships, or are in prison, or have a loved one in jail.

There are many people among us and around us for whom this Christmas comes at a time of loneliness, despair, want, and suffering.

In St. Luke's account of the birth of Jesus,



we read that the Angel of the Lord told the shepherds: "I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people." (Luke 2:10). The messenger of the Lord promises the joys of Christmas – Jesus Christ's birth – to ALL PEOPLE, including the poor, the sick, the hungry, the elderly, the uneducated, the refugee, the prisoner, the unemployed, the orphaned, and the marginalized. But such people will not experience any Christmas joy unless we share that joy with them. And often it does not take much to bring some Christmas cheer into the lives of disadvantaged people: a gesture of compassion, a word of encouragement, a Christmas card, an invitation to a family dinner, a sign of solidarity, an act of loving acceptance and understanding. And sometimes, as a pastor has said, "Being there ... that is all that's needed ... a ministry of presence, just showing up at the right time to encourage, to lend a hand, to listen, to reassure." Isn't this what Jesus did for us when He was born on that first Christmas day? He was God, yet He laid aside His glory and became a human being in order to be with us and to assure us of God's love, forgiveness, and care. That's what Jesus did for us, and that's what he wants us to do for

others, so that the joy of His birth may be extended to all people.

We have to realize that "all people" includes not only all Armenians, but also Arabs, Americans, Mexicans, Rwandans, Jews, and, yes, even Turks and Azeris. "All people" especially includes those who have not heard the Good News. "All people" includes those who may have heard the Good News but who have not responded to it; those who have not come to a new consciousness of God; those who have not committed their lives to God; those who have not received newness of life; those who have simply not acted on the Good News. But what is the Good News? This is the Good News in a nutshell: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16). But, as the apostle says, how can people believe in Jesus Christ if they haven't heard about him? How can they hear about him unless someone tells them? (Rom. 10:14).

As people who have heard the Good News and responded to it, we Christians are enjoined to share the story of Jesus with "all people," during Christmas and throughout the year. We are asked to preach the Good News about Jesus Christ and His love and saving grace, by word, by deed, and by our witness. When we do this, we will feel the joys of this holy season even more strongly in our hearts. And that will mean a blessed Christmas to us, and also to those to whom we reach out with the Good News about the coming of Jesus Christ, the Savior. □

The Miracle of Christmas

by Paul H. Sherry

In the first chapter of Matthew, the angel tells Joseph that the one who is to come shall be called Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." These are the words we need to hear in these days of trouble. When the best we do is never enough, when human misery so often overwhelms, when beauty is covered with ugliness, when innocents suffer, it is God's presence in the babe of Bethlehem that sustains, renews and transforms. In Christ Jesus God is with us, thanks be to God.

The miracle of Christmas reignited our faith in the faithfulness of our god. In the same book, another boy, Jeff, writes to God: "Dear God, it is great the way you always get the stars in the right places."

In these days we are not always sure that is so. Christmas gives us a sure star to follow and, in that confident journey of faith, life is renewed.

In the little book, *Children's Letters to God*, a little boy named Seymour writes: "Dear God, how come you did all those miracles in the old days and don't do any now?"

The miracle of Christmas provides hope that what is, need not continue to be. Mark writes to God: "I keep waiting for spring but it never come yet. Don't forget."

Christmas reminds us that God does not forget. We live in hope that the beloved community that God desires for us all may yet come to pass.

The miracle of Christmas reminds us that love is of God and that love is the final word. Nancy writes: "Dear God, do animals use you or is there somebody else for them?"

Nancy, God's love is for all creation and, in and through that love, our lives are renewed and the creation is restored.

The angel tells Joseph the good news and, even in these days, the angel tells us the good news. The One who has and is to come shall be called Emmanuel. "God is with us." Thanks be to God. Amen. □

(United Church News)

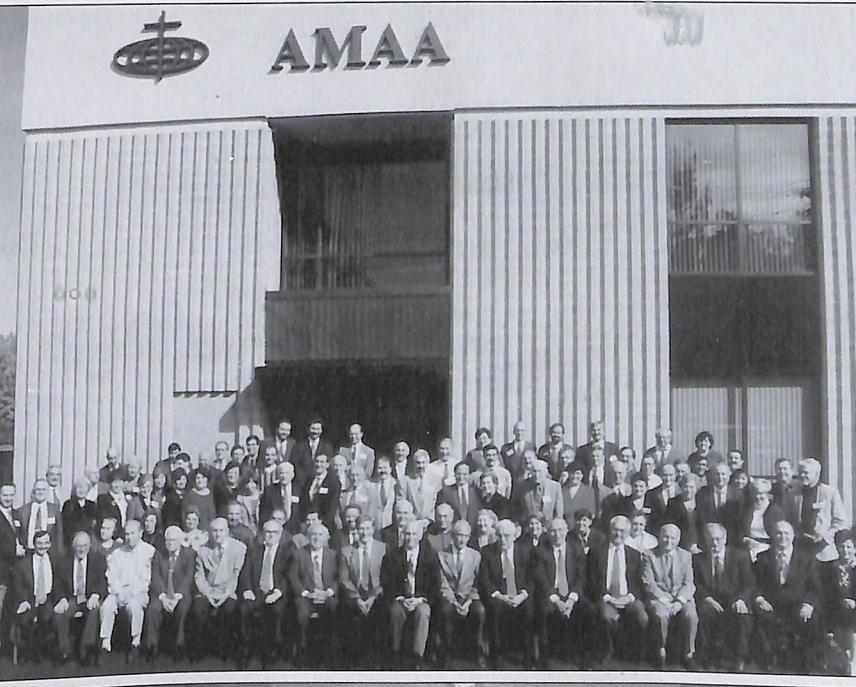
AMAA Concludes 80th Anniversary Celebrations with Memorable Events

This year's 80th anniversary celebrations of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) were concluded with a series of memorable events held at the new headquarters of the Association in Paramus, NJ. The four-day-long celebratory program, held in conjunction with the 79th annual meeting of the AMAA, began with a seminar for Armenian Evangelical pastors, church workers and lay leaders. The six-session seminar took place on October 15 and 16, 1998. The seminar's theme was "Mission: Christ's Vision." The speaker-moderator was Rev. Gilbert Bilezikian, a past president of Haigazian University in Lebanon and currently a Professor of Religion at Wheaton College, IL. Rev. Bilezikian is also the founder and pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in Wheaton, IL, which has one of the fastest-growing congregations in the country. He is a popular lecturer, in the U.S. and overseas, on church growth and church mission.

The seminar, held at the AMAA's new headquarters building, included lectures and panel discussions. Participants in the seminar found it informative, useful and inspiring. This year, in addition to representatives from churches in the U.S. and Canada, there was a large contingent of church pastors and lay leaders from overseas, including Armenia, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Iran, Lebanon, Syria and Uruguay.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

The AMAA's Board of Directors' meetings were held on Thursday evening, October 15, and Friday afternoon, October 16. President Andy Torigian chaired the meetings, which were attended by a large number of elected and ex-officio Board members, as well as special guests from Armenian Evangelical churches in the United States and abroad. Reports were read by from the chairpersons of various committees and from the representatives of the Association's mission partners around the world. Highlights of the reports included those of Rev. Sergey Shahverdian of Tehran, Iran; Rev. Sarkis Paravazian of Sofia, Bulgaria; Rev. Dr. Obed Boyadjian of Montevideo, Uruguay; Rev. René Léonian and Mr. Harout Nercessian of Yerevan, Armenia; Rev. Serge Pachaian of



Participants in the 79th Annual Meeting of the AMAA.

Brussels, Belgium; Rev. Joel Mikaelian of Marseille, France; Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, Moderator of AEUNA; Revs. Paul Haidostian and Megerdich Karagozian of Beirut, Lebanon. A special executive session was held to consider and act upon the reports and recommendations of a four-member AMAA team that had visited Beirut, Lebanon, in early Sep-

tember to discuss the needs and financial problems of the Armenian Evangelical churches and institutions in the Near East.

ANNUAL MEETING BANQUET

This year's annual meeting banquet celebrated 80 years of the AMAA's mission and service ministry. The event took place on October 16, 1998, at the Hackensack Golf

Annual Meeting Banquet



With each speaker staying within his or her time limit, the entire program ended on schedule, offering those in attendance ample time for fellowship.

Mission partners present at the banquet included representatives from Armenia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Uruguay and, of course, the United States. Also present were three representatives from the United Church Board for World Ministries of the United Church of Christ: Rev. Dr. David Hirano, Dr. Barbara Daniel Kershner and Dr. Dale Bishop. The Mayor of Paramus, NJ, the Honorable Cliff Gennarelli, was also in attendance.

AMAA President Andrew Torigian welcomed the guests and introduced Mr. Vahram Aynilian, who served as master of ceremonies. The musical selections were presented by Ms. Anoushka Manougian, vocalist, accompanied by Mr. Paul Nercessian on the piano.

Awards of recognition in the form of inscribed plaques were presented to Mr. Armand Avakian, architect, for his tireless efforts in planning and supervising the pre-occupancy redesign and renovation of the interior of the AMAA's new headquarters building, and to Albert Momjian, attorney, for his selfless service to the AMAA over several decades, including his terms as AMAA president.

A video presenting the AMAA's mission and service programs in Armenia was shown, and the Association's Representative and Deputy Representative in Armenia, Rev. René Léonian and Mr. Harout Nercessian, respectively, were introduced with appreciative comments about their excellent work in Armenia.

The keynote address was delivered by Rev. Movses Janbazian, Executive Director of the AMAA. Rev. Janbazian pointed out that the AMAA "is not just a charitable organization. Nor is it just a philanthropic foundation. The AMAA is a Christian missionary organization." Looking to the future, Rev. Janbazian stressed the following five points:

- 1) The AMAA should not limit itself to raising and using money for missions programs, but "should also encourage and facilitate the exchange of short-term or long-term fraternal workers between its mission partners in different parts of the world."
- 2) "The AMAA should vigilantly avoid the temptation of being overly impressed by the



Mr. Vahram Aynilian, MC of the 80th Anniversary Banquet; Dr. Gilbert Bilezikian, the speaker of the Seminar on Mission; and Dr. Dale Bishop, the preacher at the Service of Praise (above). A group of young AMAA members and friends from New Jersey at the 80th Anniversary Banquet (Middle). The delegates of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of France with the President and Executive Director of The AMAA

Club in Oradell, New Jersey. About 230 guests enjoyed the banquet and the attendant ceremonies.

The format for this year's banquet differed little from that for previous banquets.

What was remarkable about this banquet was its punctuality. The evening's program started at 7 p.m. sharp with the presentation of the colors, displaying the flags of the 20 countries in which the AMAA is active.

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growth of its budget and programs ... but focus at all times on developing, operating, funding and supporting such projects and activities that help plant and nurture faith communities."

3) "The AMAA should come out of its traditional Armenian parochialism and develop and support projects that serve the spiritual and physical needs of non-Armenians as well."

4) "The AMAA should focus more attention on, and make more investments in, its uniting role in the larger Armenian Evangelical world family."

5) "The AMAA should develop a special mission and service ministry to respond to the urgent needs of those Armenians who are living in Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet republics."

The evening's program concluded in the traditional manner, with the singing of the "Hayr Mer" and with a benediction. The latter, appropriately, was given by Rev. Dr. Giragos H. Chopourian, Honorary Executive Director of the AMAA.

ANNUAL MEETING

The 79th Annual Meeting of the AMAA took place on Saturday, October 17, 1998, at the AMAA's new headquarters building in Paramus, NJ. In attendance were 87 individuals, representing Armenian Evangelical churches worldwide, AMAA mission committees and AMAA affiliated organizations. There were representatives from France, Lebanon, Syria, Bulgaria, Belgium, Uruguay, Iran, Armenia and Canada, as well as the United States.

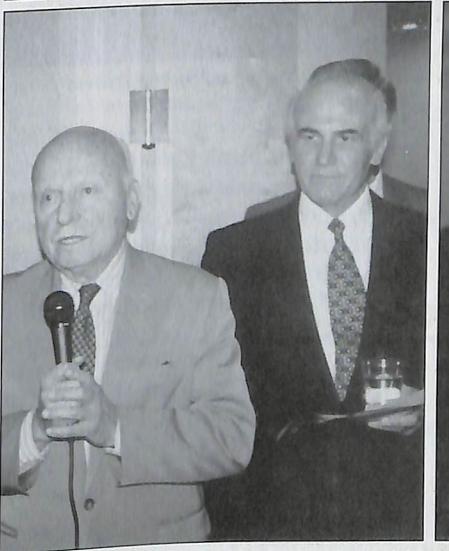
Reports were presented by the officers of the Association, by committee chairpersons and by representatives of affiliated organizations. Collectively, the reports reflect an organization that is expanding its services to Armenian individuals, families and organizations not only in the United States but also throughout the world and especially in Armenia. The following highlights, extracted from the reports, show the scope of the Association's activities:

– The AMAA's budget for the next fiscal year is \$5,210,184. Of this amount, about 20% is earmarked for relief and development projects in Armenia.

– The AMAA has nearly 20,000 members and 1,000 life members.

– The Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in Armenia is comprised of 50 churches and fellowships.

– The AMAA's total income during the past year was about \$6 million. About 10% of this was allocated for administration expenses and overhead, including technological upgrades.



Clockwise: current AMAA president, Mr. Andy Torigian, immediate past president, attorney Albert Momjian (center), and Honorary Executive Director, Rev. Dr. G. H. Chopourian. Mr. Robert Hekemian presenting certificate of appreciation plaque to architect Armand Avakian (left). Mrs. Joyce Stein flanked by the Hekemian brothers, Robert (left) and Samuel. Mr. George Philibosian addressing the guests at the dedication of new headquarters of AMAA.

non) and a local staff of 20. Augmenting this cadre during the past year were 100 or more part-time volunteers.

– The AMAA's Orphan/Child Sponsorship Program in Armenia and Karabagh helps 1,600 impoverished children and their families; this year's Summer Camp Program in Armenia and Karabagh was attended by 4,500 children; last year's Christmas programs reached about 15,000 children.

– This year the AMAA's Scholarship Committee awarded \$165,000 in financial grants to 142 students out of the 170 who applied.

– Haigazian University completed its move

Dedication of the New Headquarters

back to its former campus in West Beirut, Lebanon, after extensive repair and renovation work on its war-damaged buildings. Last year there were 468 students (representing 20 nationalities) attending Haigazian; of these, 57.5% were of Armenian descent. Haigazian's major problem now is the lack of financial aid for the many qualified but poor Armenian students seeking admission.

It should be pointed out that the AMAA's mission and service programs provide help to all needy Armenians, irrespective of religious or political affiliation.

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Each year, shortly before its annual meeting, the AMAA elects one-third of its Board of Directors for three-year terms. This year, in mid-September, 4,687 ballots were mailed to active members and life members of the Association. A slate of 16 candidates was presented to the electorate, who could vote for up to eight candidates.

The ballots were tallied by the Nominating Committee on October 16 and the results announced the following day, at the annual meeting, by the chairman of the Nominating Committee, Mr. Edward Janjigian. In addition to the top eight vote-getters, the Board of Directors appoints an additional candidate from the slate, bringing the "Class of 2001" to nine. The new Directors are: Ara Balian of Watertown, MA, Sales/Marketing Executive; Harry Balukjian of Bethesda, MD, Engineer; John Cherkezian of Englewood Cliffs, NJ, President of Norex Int'l., Inc.; Arouss Darpinian of New Milford, NJ, Teacher (retired); Mardie Juskalian of Philadelphia, PA, Real Estate Appraiser and Broker (retired); Lawrence Kalfayan of Glendale, CA, Attorney; Jeanmarie Papelian of Salem, NH, Attorney; Alan Philibosian of Oradell, NJ, Attorney; Jack Sheen of Santa Barbara, CA, Surgeon.

This year's ballot included a proposal to offer 12 candidates, instead of 16, in future Board elections. The proposal was approved overwhelmingly.

Following the annual meeting on October 17th, the new Board held its first meeting and elected its officers for the coming year. All of the current officers were re-elected to an additional one-year term: President: Andrew Torigian; Vice Presidents: Robert Hekemian, Sr. and George Phillips, Esq.; Treasurer: Vahram Aynilian; Asst. Treasurer: Aram R. Minnetian; Recording Secretaries: Arouss Darpinian, Harry



Representatives of mission partners from different countries join in offering the prayer of dedication.

Dulgarian and Joseph Zeronian.

Elections were also held for a new Nominating Committee, whose members serve two-year terms. Eight candidates are offered, four from the AMAA Board and four from AMAA-member churches, and two from each group are elected. The four electees this year were Edward Janjigian, George Phillips, Esq., George Philibosian and Rev. Ron Tovmassian.

NEW AMAA HQ BUILDING DEDICATED

As the programs and activities of the AMAA expanded during the past decade, the space limitations of its existing headquarters building became increasingly restrictive. Plans to expand the existing building were studied, but were not considered to be cost-effective. Over a year ago the Association purchased a nearby building — about a mile away but still in Paramus — that was large enough to serve the AMAA's current and anticipated needs. The two-story, 11,000 square-foot building required extensive internal redesign, renovation and refurbishing. The work was completed earlier this year, but the dedication of the building was postponed until the week of the Association's annual meeting. The new headquarters and its state-of-the-art facilities is a tribute to the dedicated efforts of Armand Avakian, volunteer Project Architect, and the members of the Association's Relocation Committee, George Philibosian

A key to the building was presented to Rev. Janbazian by Mr. George Philibosian. And a commemorative plaque was presented to the AMAA by the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East in recognition of the Association's services in the Middle East.

The dedication ceremonies ended with prayers in several languages and the singing of "Hayr Mer," after which those present were invited to a buffet reception and an inspection tour of the building.

SERVICE OF PRAISE

The 80th anniversary Service of Praise took place at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ. The service was led by Rev. Ara Heghinian, pastor of the host church. Inspiring messages were given in English by Dr. Dale Bishop, and in Armenian by Rev. Megerdich Karagozian. The service included a moment of remembrance in memory of AMAA members who had made the transition from this life to life eternal during the past year. The service was also highlighted with a special ceremony of installation of the new officers and Board members of the Association. A high point of the service



Installation of the new officers of the AMAA.

was the sacrament of the Holy Communion which was led by Rev. Dr. G. H. Chopourian and Rev. Movses B. Janbazian (past and current Executive Directors, respectively), and served by pastors representing different countries.

The four busy days of meetings, delib-

erations, fellowship and worship offered memorable opportunities to celebrate 80 years of AMAA history and ministry, to praise God for His goodness and guidance, and to be recommitted to the Association's mission of preaching the gospel in word and deed. □

Thoughts about the Annual Meeting

Editor's Note: The following letter was addressed to Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, the Executive Director of the AMAA.

I finally have a moment to share with you some thoughts about the annual meeting, which was magnificent. I only wish my schedule would have allowed me to attend some of the seminars, which Badveli Bakalian said were very stimulating. I hope someone was taking notes!

For me, one of the highlights was your keynote speech, which people are still talking about. Somehow you really managed to focus a clear light on the road ahead. In particular (although by no means exclusively), your remark about abandoning the "parochial Armenian attitude" in order to expand our vision to meet the physical and spiritual needs of all people, was courageous, timely, and (if you ask me) nearly breathtaking. And, so far as I could determine,

mine, the remark really seemed to resonate with your audience. Could this be another step in seeing Armenia not as the first Christian nation, but the "foremost Christian nation," as a friend of mine once suggested?

I also found much to reflect upon in your discussion about how to measure the success of the AMAA. So many organizations become victims of their own success -- I've seen it happen -- and one of the steps along that sad road is mistaking a growing budget for a growing mission. I think it's wonderful that the AMAA is growing in financial terms (thanks entirely to Al Moomjian's stewardship over the endowment, as he noted!), but even more difficult than raising funds is gaining a sense of whether we are moving ahead, or just treading water, or becoming self-congratulatory and complacent. This, I think, was another of the great themes of your speech.

If I had to pick another highlight of the

weekend, it would be that wonderful moment when the director of the social services center from California presented you with the check for \$3,000, the result of \$2 contributions from the needy people they serve. That was amazing, for many reasons; the one which struck me most profoundly was the sense that real mission work does not divide the faithful into the "givers" and the "receivers." We all receive God's love, which none of us earns. The best we can ever do is share that charity with others. So even the simple gesture of asking the needy to give \$2 to the AMAA turns out not to be simply symbolic, but (it turns out) a real contribution to the work of God's church.

My thanks to you and the AMAA staff for putting together such an invigorating, and restorative weekend.

Peter Kougasian, Esq.
Pelham, NY

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Haigazian University Restructures its Board

The new Board of Trustees for Haigazian University (HU) held its first organizational meeting, on October 17, 1998, at the AMAA headquarters in Paramus, New Jersey. The meeting was significant in that it saw the birth of a single Board of Trustees made up of representatives from both the Middle East and the United States. Since its founding in 1955, Haigazian University had been governed by a Board of Trustees based in Los Angeles, CA, and a Board of Managers based in Beirut, Lebanon. While such an arrangement had worked well, especially during the years of the civil war in Lebanon, restructuring the governing body of the University was deemed necessary in order to respond to the demands of the growing educational institution. The Board, now international in scope, is appointed by the AMAA and UAECNE, the founding and sponsoring organizations of HU.

The composition of the new Board of Trustees is as follows: H. Steven Aharonian, M.D. (CA); Professor Sossy Balian (Lebanon); Rev. Carnegie S. Calian, D. Theo., Ph.D. (PA); Rev. Peter Doghramji, Ph.D., D.D. (PA); Mr. Nabil Ekmekji (Lebanon); Rev. Paul Haidostian, Ph.D. (Lebanon); Mr. Robert Hekemian (NJ); Mr. Samuel Hekemian (NJ); H. Philip Hovanian, Ph.D., P.E. (NY); Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, Executive Director, AMAA (NJ); Mr. Hrair Jebejian (Lebanon); Rev. Megerdich Karagoezian, President, UAECNE (Lebanon); Dr. Suzan Kassab (Lebanon); Professor J. B. M. Kassarjian (MA); Rev. John Khanjian, Ph.D., President, Haigazian University (Lebanon); Albert Momjian, Esq. (PA); Mr. Herair Mouradian (CA); Robert H. Philibosian, Esq. (CA); George Phillips, Esq. (CA); Rev. Robert Sarkessian (Lebanon); Mrs. Joyce Stein, Chairperson: Stephen Philibosian Foundation (CA); Mr. Andrew Torigian, President, AMAA (NJ); and Joseph P. Zeronian, Ed.D. (CA).

As the meeting began, Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, Executive Director of the AMAA, acknowledged the meritorious leadership which Dr. Rendel Levonian, former Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Rev. Robert Sarkessian, former Chairman of the Board of Managers, had provided during their many years of service.



He mentioned that the appointment of a single board of Trustees is yet another phase in the remarkable progress of Haigazian University, which is the only Armenian institution of higher learning outside Armenia. Then, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian recognized that many new opportunities would arise with the establishment of the new Board and that these opportunities would have their correlative challenges. The most immediate of these challenges were presented to the Board in detail by Dr. John Khanjian, President of Haigazian University. Dr. Khanjian pointed out that the University is seeking incorporation in the United States as a non-profit institution, accreditation with American universities and an increase in endowments. Representing the Stephen Philibosian Foundation was Mrs. Joyce Philibosian Stein, who pledged enduring support for Haigazian, the institution which had meant so much to her father, the late AMAA benefactor, Stephen Philibosian.

In the course of the meeting, AMAA solicitor Mr. Albert Momjian presented the new bylaws of HU Board of Trustees, which reflected both continuity and change. The



The participants in formative meeting of the new Board of Trustees of HU (above). Revs. Movses B. Janbazian (right) and Hovhannes Karjian signing on behalf of AMAA and UAECNE, respectively, the new bylaws of the Board of Trustees of HU while Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian witnesses the historic event.

Board elected its officers as follows: Chairman: Albert Momjian, Esq.; Vice Chairman: Rev. Robert Sarkessian; Treasurer: Mr. Nabil Ekmekji; Assistant Treasurer: Mr. Robert Hekemian, Sr.; Secretary: Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji; Recording Secretary: Ms. Susan Kassab.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees, scheduled for July 8, 1999, will be held at the newly renovated campus of Haigazian University in West Beirut, Lebanon. □

AMAA Team Visits Near East

Last September, a four-member team, representing the Near East Committee of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), visited Beirut, Lebanon, to confer with the leadership of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE). The AMAA's Near East Committee, co-chaired by Dr. H. Philip Hovanian and Mr. Edward Janjigian, was appointed in early 1998 to review the issues and problems affecting the life and witness of the Armenian Evangelical communities in Syria and Lebanon, and to recommend appropriate solutions for the consideration and action of the Board of Directors. The AMAA team included the following: Mr. Andrew Torigian, President of the Association; Mr. Edward Janjigian, Board member and co-chairman of Near East Committee; Mr. Louis Kurkjian, Board member; and Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, Executive Director.

The AMAA representatives held extensive conferences with the Central Committee of UAECNE. They also met with the clergy and lay leaders of the local Armenian Evangelical community, including Rev. Megerdich Karagoezian (the newly elected president of UAECNE), Rev. Hovhannes Karjian (former president), Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian (Chairman of Central Committee), Mr. Hrair Jebejian (former treasurer); Deputy Apraham Dedeyan (The Evangelical member of the Lebanese Parliament), Dr. Yervant Kassouny (editor of UAECNE publications), and others.

Following the team's work in Lebanon, Rev. Janbazian and Mr. Torigian visited Istanbul, Turkey, and Sofia, Bulgaria, to confer with the leadership of the local Armenian Evangelical churches. There are only two Armenian Evangelical churches in Istanbul — one in Pera (the "mother" of all Armenian Evangelical churches) and another in Gedik Pasha. There are four Armenian Evangelical churches active in Bulgaria — one in each of the Armenian communities of Sofia (the capital), Plovdiv, Varna and Russe. There are also small Armenian Evangelical Fellowships in Burgas and Shoumen.

Upon their return, the AMAA representatives presented their reports and recommendations to the Board of Directors, which passed appropriate resolution aiming at the enhancement of the effectiveness of the witness and service of the Armenian Evangelical communities of Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Bulgaria. □



(1st picture) AMAA representative with Deputy Apraham Dedeyan, member of the Lebanese Parliament. (2nd picture) From Left Mr. Krikor Agabaloglu, Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, Archbishop Mesrob Moutafian, now the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul), Mr. Andy Torigian and Mr. Hovhannes Torkomoglu. (3rd picture) Mr. Torigian with the pastors and church workers of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Bulgaria.

Orphan Care Committee Raises \$30,000 in Boston

For the past 10 years and ever since the devastating earthquake in Armenia, the Orphan/Child Care Fund of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has played a vital role in caring for the orphaned and needy children in Armenia. Thousands of children and their families have benefited both physically and spiritually.

Annually, 1600 children and their families are under the direct care of AMAA's Orphan/Child Care Fund through its Child Sponsorship Program. Sponsors from the US and elsewhere support these families with their contributions. \$240.00 supports one child and his or her family for a period of one year.

The AMAA Orphan/Child Care Fund also provides direct help to schools, orphanages, day care centers, clinics and hospitals. It also organizes summer camps for children in Armenia and Karabagh.

Children in Armenia depend on the Orphan/Child Care Fund, which in its turn depends upon the support of caring people.

Lately, the Boston group of the Fund organized a successful fundraiser at the Oakley Country Club in Watertown, MA, in support of the needy children. This was the Fourth Annual Luncheon/Children's Fashion Show which was held on October 7, 1998.

Twenty-four talented and dedicated hostesses decorated the tables with centerpieces. These beautiful pieces were silent-auctioned along with the live auction of twelve items which were all sold, thanks to the talents of celebrity guest Mike Wankum of Channel WB56, WLVI TV in Boston.

Sixteen children participated in the Fashion Show, as they adorned the runway in high fashion clothing from Gymboree Stores, which generously provided the outfits for the show.

Mr. Dikran Youmshakian, the Office Manager of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, participated in the program with the presentation of a detailed report on the activities of the AMAA Orphan/Child Care Fund in Armenia and Karabagh. He thanked the participants for their overwhelming support.

This exciting fundraiser was made possible through the hard work and loving labors of the volunteer members of the AMAA Orphan/Child Care Fund of Boston — Rosemary Atamian, Joanne

Yes, I would like to invest in the Armenian children's future to guarantee the survival of our homeland.

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ to the Armenian Orphan/Child Care Fund of the AMAA.

Name _____

Address _____

(Make tax deductible donations to AMAA Orphan/Child Care Fund, 31 West Century Rd., Paramus, NJ 07652)



Two beautiful children participating in the fashion show (above).

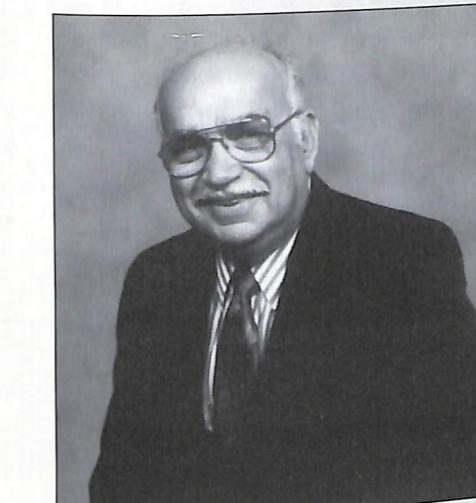
Two of the many hardworking members of the AMAA's Orphan/Child Care Committee in Boston, MA.

DeAngelis, Nancy Eskandarian, Joyce Janjigian, Jennifer Mugar Flaherty, Sheila Palandjian, Michele Simourian and Jacqueline Stepanian. Thanks to their efforts the significant amount of \$30,000 net was raised. All expenses - food, fashion show, centerpieces and auctioned items were donated.

The AMAA Orphan/Child Care Fund is a worthy investment in the future of Armenia. Many of the orphans once cared for have grown up now to become healthy individuals thanks to the support of caring people. Unfortunately there are still hundreds of needy children in Armenia and Karabagh who depend on assistance from abroad to survive these difficult times. Let us invest in their future to guarantee the survival of our homeland.

Those who would like to support AMAA's Orphan/Child Care projects in Armenia can do so by completing and returning the coupon on this page to the AMAA Orphan/Child Care Fund, 31 W. Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. □

FAPC HONORS REV. BERNARD GUEKGUEZIAN



The members of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno culminated their 100th Anniversary observances with a harvest Banquet and tribute to Reverend Bernard Guekguezian on October 13, 1998.

The banquet honored Rev. Guekguezian, who has literally lived and ministered around the globe. A native of Antioch, Turkey, Reverend Guekguezian emigrated to Lebanon in 1939 and completed a combined course of study at the American University of Beirut and Near East School of Theology in 1952. He served in Alexandria, Egypt, and then came to the United States. He studied at Fuller Theological Seminary and then earned a Master of Arts degree in Christian Education from New York Theological Seminary. Since his ordination in 1959, Rev. Guekguezian has served as the pastor of the Armenian Congregational Church of the Martyrs' in Worcester, MA; the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ; and the First Armenian Presbyterian Church (FAPC) of Fresno, CA. His two decades of service at FAPC, have been marked by an outreach to native Californians and to Armenian immigrants from the Middle East and Armenia. Rev. Guekguezian has officiated at 163 weddings, 212 baptisms, and more than 200 funerals during his Fresno ministry. In addition to pastoral duties, he has served as Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, Vice-President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, Vice President of the Armenian Theological Students' Aid, Inc., and member of the Presbytery of San Joaquin New Church Development Committee.

INSTALLATION OF REV. KUPEYAN AS PASTOR OF FIRST ARMENIAN CHURCH OF BELMONT, MA



The Kupeyan family.

tor of the First Armenian Church (FAC), Mr. Richard Kazanjian.

Among those attending the service were Rev. Kupeyan's parents, as well as two sisters, Maggie and Betty who had come from Montreal, Canada. Following the service, Rev. Mihran and Mrs. Annie Kupeyan were honored with an elegant reception prepared by the ladies of the Church. Prior to their acceptance of the FAC's call last Spring, the Kupeyans served the Armenian Cilicia Congregational Church of Pasadena, CA. The Kupeyans have three children: Joel, a freshman at Military Academy in Vermont; and Samuel and Aline, 3rd and 5th graders at the Elementary School in Tewksbury, MA.

APOSTOLIC AND EVANGELICAL CHURCHES HOLD JOINT EVANGELISTIC PROGRAM

The Northern California Armenian Apostolic and Evangelical Churches joined together for a special spiritual program called "Hayazartnoum" (Armenian Awakening). The program was held at the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church (CACC) of San Francisco, CA. Participating in the program were Rev. Fr. Yeghia Hairabedian of the Saint James Armenian Apostolic church of Sacramento; Rev. Fr. Sarkis Petoyan of Saint John Armenian Apostolic Church of San Francisco; the choir of the Krouzian-Zakarian School, under the direction of Mr. Sarkis Panosian; Rev. James Kizirian of the Bethel Armenian Evangelical Church of San Francisco; Ms. Ani Toroyon (solo) and Mrs. Armine Adrouny (piano); The Calvary Worship Team with

CAHL: Center for Armenian Handicapped in Lebanon

(An AMAA-Supported Institution of Christian Service)

It is said that a community — or a nation — may be judged by the way it treats its weakest members. It would follow, then, that the more Christian a community is — or claims to be — the more attentive it should be to the well-being of its less fortunate members — the handicapped, the incapacitated, the retarded, the elderly, the destitute. Most of us don't have to be told who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40)

In the United States and other developed countries there is a variety of social services — some government run, others privately operated — that look after the welfare of the old, weak and handicapped. In the Middle East, however, there is less than adequate government response to these problems.

CAHL is an acronym for "Center for Armenian Handicapped in Lebanon." This Center, owned by Armenian Evangelicals, and operated jointly by Armenian Evangelical and Apostolic churches, serves the entire Armenian community in Lebanon, irrespective of religious or political affiliation. CAHL's services include a school and workshop for the blind, deaf and slow learners; an old-age home; and a resource offering meals and other help to non-resident elderly and poor people.

The roots of CAHL go back to 1915, to the massacres unleashed by the Turks against defenseless Armenian men, women and children. Present in Turkey at the time were a number of Protestant missionaries operating schools and hospitals in Armenian communities. As Turkish savagery depopulated these communities, the missionaries did what they could, under difficult and dangerous conditions, to save the lives of Armenian children in their communities. These children, now orphaned, numbered in the thousands. They were protected, cared for and, as conditions permitted, moved to safer areas in Syria and Lebanon.

One missionary couple who devoted their adult lifetimes to caring for these young victims of "brutality, pestilence and war" were Dr. Jacob Kuenzler and his wife Elizabeth. Dr. Kuenzler first went to Turkey in 1895 as a medical missionary from Switzerland, in time to witness the general massacre in-



A volunteer helping a resident of CAHL's Old Age Home (above). Students on CAHL's Special Education Program learning how to save the environment by planting.

stigated by the Turkish Sultan that year against the Armenian population.

Dr. Kuenzler's daughter, Ida, later described her parents as follows:

"Jacob Kuenzler joined a German mission at Urfa in Turkey in the closing years of the last century. He was to serve the Armenian community in Turkey for twenty-five years during the appalling days of massacre and

revolt. His marriage to Elizabeth in 1905 had brought an ideal life-partner and together they faced the dangers and hardships of this terrible time.

"In the early 1920's Papa and Mama Kuenzler began work for the Near East Relief Organization when their abiding achievement was in evacuating thousands of Armenian orphans from Turkey to the

security of Lebanon. Here they were in charge of an orphanage in the beautiful village of Ghazir. Not only did the orphans find the love and care they so desperately needed but they were taught useful trades and prepared for their future life.

"In a further great phase of their careers Papa and Mama Kuenzler in the 1930's transformed the lives of refugees in Beirut by setting up pioneer houses and homes for widows. Once again they taught these unfortunate people self-reliance and brought them dignity and hope."

By 1922 the number of Armenian orphans who had been brought to Aleppo, Syria, exceeded the resources of the local orphanage. The Near East Relief Organization decided to send 120 blind orphans to an orphanage in Jerusalem that maintained a section for blind children. The group got as far as Lebanon but was unable to reach its destination because the British authorities in Palestine refused to admit them without payment of a large fee per child. This impasse lasted for several months, as the blind orphans in Lebanon waited in squalid makeshift quarters. Dr. Kuenzler at this time was in charge of a girls' orphanage in Lebanon. When he heard about the blind orphans he arranged to have them brought to his orphanage, where he and his wife made room for them and provided the love and care that nurtured the children physically and spiritually.

In 1926 another Swiss missionary, Mr. Theodore Visser, was given the responsibility of supervising the blind orphans. He and his wife, Alice, ran this orphanage for 20 years. In 1946 the orphanage was moved to the Bourj Hammoud sector of Beirut and, under its new name, "Institute for the Blind", was run by Mr. Karl Meyer and his wife Marta. In 1963 Mr. Peter Braunschweig and his wife Heidi took charge of the Institute.

In 1964 the Institute was handed over to the Armenian Evangelical community. Since an old age home had been added to the Institute, it was given its present name to reflect its then current scope. In 1968 Mr. Felix Zeigler was appointed as manager of the Center. During the 14 years he and his wife Hannah ran the Center, handicraft classes were expanded and a new building for the elderly was begun. When the Zeiglers retired in 1982, the supervisory duties were assigned to Mr. Krikor Bizdikian, who became the Center's first Armenian director. In 1988 Mr. Kevork

Karaboyadjian — the present director — took charge of the Center.

Over the years the services provided by CAHL have gradually changed, in step with the changing needs of the Armenian community in Lebanon. CAHL's largest and most active division is the old age home. The Center currently cares for 140 elderly women and men, about half of whom are in the home's hospital wing and require regular medical attention. The elderly are provided with shelter, meals and, when necessary, nursing and medical care. The Center's Home for the Blind currently houses a dozen residents, ten of them blind and two mentally disturbed.

Structured classes are offered for children and young people who are blind, deaf or slow learners. For two years now, there have been no blind students and only four deaf students. The rest of the 52 students fall into the "slow learner" category. Associated with the school is the Center's workshop. Here, young people learn carpentry and wicker work. Once they acquire sufficient skills, they produce chairs, brooms, baskets and similar items that are sold in the local marketplace.

Finally, the Center provides help to about 100 non-resident individuals and families who are desperately poor. This help is in the form of meals, laundry service, bathing facilities and basic medical screening. Since the resources of the Center are limited, efforts are made to register these people with other social institutions.

A center such as CAHL requires a large staff. Teaching the handicapped requires a lot of one-on-one instruction and attention. The Center's elderly residents have to be fed and otherwise cared for; those among them who are sick — many terminally ill old people are brought to the home — require



Mr. Kevork Karaboyadjian, Director of CAHL.

more intensive attention. For handicapped young people, the Center offers an opportunity to escape a miserable and lonely existence on the margins of society by teaching them skills that can help make them productive and even self-supporting members of society. For the elderly the Center offers an opportunity to live out their lives in relative comfort and dignity.

The fact that this Center survived the prolonged civil war in Lebanon and continues its ministry today in a time of runaway inflation and high unemployment should be a source of pride for Armenian Evangelicals and worthy of their support. The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) supports CAHL with significant grants each year. Those who wish to help CAHL in its vital mission may send their tax-deductible donations to the AMAA, earmarking their gifts to CAHL. □

 Yes, I would like to support the vital services of the Centers for the Armenian Handicapped in Lebanon.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

(Make tax deductible donations to AMAA, earmarked to CAHL)

ACTS OF FAITH AND DEEDS OF LOVE

- Does your will reflect God's will?
- Does your will provide for your family?
- Does your will express your commitment to mission? Is it a statement of your stewardship? An expression of your gratitude to God and other persons?

We are gifted. Life and all that sustains it, physically and spiritually, are gifts. Per-

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) is offering the following brochures to its members and friends as a ministry of service.

- The State Has Made Your Will
- What Difference Does a Will Make?
- You Never Need to Change Your Will Unless...
- 11 Things to Remember
- How to make a Will That Works
- Giving Through Your Will
- Your Guide to Effective Giving
- Giving Through Retirement Plans
- Giving Through Life Insurance
- Giving Through Gift Annuities
- Giving Through Life Income Plans

sons who support and love are gifts to each other. The opportunity and ability to acquire possessions and wealth is a gift.

God is the giver! Because God gives, we give!

The Biblical message is clear:

- "It is God who gives you power to get wealth," Deuteronomy 8:18.
- "To whom much is given, of that person much will be required." Luke 12:48
- "Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." James 2:17

All significant giving is intentional and planned. It reflects our commitment and faith. It represents choices and decisions. It often means giving up one option or possession for another.

Deeds of love witness to faith. Everyone wants to make a difference — To make life better for family, community, and world. The way money is used is one means of achieving personal and faith goals. The economics textbooks describe conspicuous consumption as the use of money to impress neighbors and friends. Inconspicuous giving is the use of money to express our deepest beliefs and hopes, even our gratitude to God.

The stewardship of accumulated assets is as important as the stewardship of income. Most persons are not fully aware of the

extent of their accumulated possessions. Some are hidden or unrealized in pension funds, appreciated real estate, or stocks and life insurance. In fact, it is possible today to have an extensive estate without ever having had the sense of real wealth.

What can be done to translate acts of faith into deeds of love?

- Faithfully give a percentage of your income, at least 10%, to church, missionary organizations and other institutions that make a difference.
- Carefully review the extent of accumulated assets. Determine to bequeath in your will part of your assets to Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc.
- Make certain your will is current and reflects your stewardship commitment.

In Preparing your will, your attorney should be consulted. If you are considering a bequest to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), you may wish to convey your intentions, in strict confidence, by writing or telephoning to the Association's Executive Director, Rev. Movses B. Janbazian.

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of America**
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